

**Department of State**

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2018 Teacher Exchange Program**

**Announcement Type:** New Cooperative Agreement

**Funding Opportunity Number:** ECA-ECAAS-18-001

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** 19.408

**Application Deadline:** June 22, 2017

**Executive Summary:** The Office of Global Educational Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State, announces an open competition for up to three cooperative agreements to administer a combined total of four components of the Office's Teacher Exchange Program in Fiscal Year 2018. U.S. public and private non-profit organizations or consortia or other combinations of eligible organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) may submit a proposal to cooperate with the Bureau in the administration of the FY 2018 Teacher Exchange Program. For FY 2018, applicant organizations are required to submit a single proposal to administer all four components A, B, C and D as characterized below, and submit a separate administrative and program budget for each component. Applicant organizations are encouraged to develop synergies among the components and look for administrative efficiencies. ECA anticipates issuing up to three cooperative agreements, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds. ECA anticipates awarding all four components, individually or collectively, to a total of no more than three applicants. ECA reserves the right to fully or partially fund or to not fund a given component or program under a component from the eligible proposals that are submitted. Although geographic regions or countries are noted below, applicant organizations must demonstrate flexibility and the willingness to work in locations that may not be identified at the present time. ECA reserves the right to add or delete regions or countries depending on Bureau priorities and the availability of funds. Please see section B.) Federal Award Information below for additional details. The amounts listed for each program are provided below to enable applicant organizations to prepare budgets for planning purposes and are subject to change. ECA estimates total funding for administrative and program costs of these programs to be approximately \$10,450,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

To facilitate effective communication between ECA's Teacher Exchange Branch (ECA/A/S/X) and the award recipient(s) cooperating on these programs, applicant organizations should have an office and staff located in Washington, D.C. at the time of application.

More specific information for each program is provided below and in the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document.

The Presidentially appointed J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB) is responsible for select programs listed below, and has issued overall policy guidelines and selection criteria which are available at the following website:

<https://eca.state.gov/fulbright/about-fulbright/j-william-fulbright-foreign-scholarship-board-ffsb/ffsb-policies>. The Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB) is responsible for the final selection of all Fulbright candidates. Organizations cooperating with the Bureau on a program that falls under the oversight of the FFSB must ensure compliance with all FFSB policies and procedures and fully and properly identify these programs as both Fulbright Programs and U.S. Department of State Programs in all communications.

#### **A. Program Description:**

##### **Authority:**

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through this legislation.

##### **Purpose:**

The Bureau's Teacher Exchange Programs prepare teachers for leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century so they may help their students develop a global perspective and build the knowledge, skills, and insights needed for future study and careers. Primary and secondary (K-12) teachers participate in professional development exchanges to enhance their teaching abilities, improve education systems, and advance the educational outcomes and broaden the worldview of their students.

Programs prioritize engaging teachers, both in the United States and abroad, who reach underserved students in both urban and rural communities, minority students, students in career and technical education programs, and students with disabilities to ensure that the next generation is provided with equal opportunities to acquire the global knowledge and skills needed to succeed.

The Teacher Exchange Programs offer a significant multiplier effect, as each teacher shares knowledge and skills with thousands of students over the course of his or her career. Collectively, these same teachers reach hundreds of thousands of students over their professional careers.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity reinforces the Bureau's engagement with primary and secondary school educators and seeks interested applicant organizations to administer teacher exchange programming for domestic and international teachers. Detailed descriptions of the program components are provided under the Funding Opportunity Description section of this document and in the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document associated with this solicitation. Proposals should reflect a vision for all components, interpreting the goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act and the Teacher Exchange Programs with creativity, as well as providing innovative ideas and recommendations.

Up to three award recipients may be issued cooperative agreements under the FY 2018 Teacher Exchange Program NOFO. The selected award recipient(s) will be responsible for providing complete programmatic and administrative support for each assigned component including the following broad categories: program planning and management; participant recruitment and placement; orientation and preparation of participants and host/mentor educators; enrichment activities; participant monitoring and support; fiscal management and budgeting; program monitoring and evaluation (including ad hoc program and financial reports as requested by the Teacher Exchange Branch); and alumni programming and follow-on activities. This work will be supervised under the auspices of the Cooperative Agreement(s) by ECA. Should one or more components of the FY 2018 Teacher Exchange Program be awarded to (a) recipient(s) that does/do not currently administer those program components, the new recipient(s) and current administrator(s) of the Teacher Exchange Program's relevant component(s) will be required to collaborate closely to ensure a successful transition. Proposals should include schedules and timelines for notifying ECA, overseas partners, potential applicants and participants of recruitment cycles, placements, travel arrangements and cross-cultural and program information in a timely manner. Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations and FFSB regulations, as relevant. Teacher exchange participants in the United States and abroad should be identified through open, merit-based competitions.

### **Programs for U.S. Teachers**

The Teacher Exchange Branch's mission reflects a growing body of research indicating that their future careers will depend heavily upon the ability of U.S. students to work and collaborate in multiple cultural contexts and navigate in an increasingly competitive and globalized world. The Bureau's Teacher Exchange Programs reflect the critical need for teachers to further develop their own global competencies so they may better help their students develop these skills and abilities at the primary and secondary level.

The two components described below provide professional development opportunities to U.S. teachers from public, private and charter schools in urban, suburban, and rural areas across the United States. U.S. teachers develop the

leadership and professional skills to ensure that their students are knowledgeable about the world and prepared for careers in an increasingly competitive global economy. Teachers improve educational outcomes for students as they share best instructional practices from their host countries across their U.S. schools, districts, and communities. Upon return to their U.S. classrooms, teachers also implement school action plans, design and teach new courses and curricula, and build international partnerships that bring a global perspective to the teaching of STEM, social studies, foreign languages, language arts, vocational education, special education and the arts, and after school and counseling programs.

### **Component A – for U.S. Teachers**

#### **The Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching (Semester Research and Short Term) Programs**

1. As part of the **Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching (DA) semester research program**, U.S. teachers apply to the U.S. cooperating organization to carry out a project of their own design to research and adapt best educational practices from abroad and develop new, global content to use in their classrooms and schools when they return to the United States. During the program, the Fulbright Distinguished Teachers conduct their project, take courses for professional development, and learn from and share their expertise with teachers and students in their host countries. Upon completion of the program, teachers return to the United States with new strategies and resources to improve the education outcomes of U.S. students in their classrooms, schools and communities. Based on proposals submitted by U.S. teachers to conduct these activities in specific eligible countries, the U.S. Embassy, Fulbright Commission, or other organization in each participating host country will facilitate a relevant academic or professional affiliation in consultation with each U.S. Distinguished Teacher. For FY 2018, approximately 35 U.S. teachers are expected to take part in the program for three to six month periods between September 2018 and July 2019. In FY 2018, the program may take place in the following locations: Botswana, Colombia, Finland, Greece, India, Israel, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Vietnam, and the Palestinian Territories. ECA reserves the right to add or remove countries and regions depending on Bureau and Mission priorities.

2. The **Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Short Term program** will also offer an exchange opportunity for approximately 25 U.S. master teachers to serve as experts abroad at schools, government ministries, or educational organizations for a period of approximately two to six weeks. While sharing their expertise, U.S. teachers hone their skills as consultants and teacher trainers and build global knowledge, skills, and connections to bring back to their home schools and districts.

In FY 2018, the program may take place in the following locations: Botswana, Colombia, India, Mexico, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, South Korea, or Vietnam. The U.S. cooperating organization will work with the Bureau and U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions in these locations to develop a list of projects at local host institutions for which U.S. teachers may apply. ECA reserves the right to add or remove countries and regions depending on Bureau and Mission priorities.

For planning purposes, the budget for program and administration for the two program models for Component A is estimated at approximately \$1,795,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

### **Component B – for U.S. Teachers**

As part of the **Teachers for Global Classrooms (TGC) program**, teachers participate in an intensive on-line course on the best practices for internationalizing U.S. education and then travel to priority countries designated by the State Department to study the society, culture, and political and education systems.

Seven groups of approximately 12-13 U.S. teachers (for a total of approximately 90 U.S. teachers) travel abroad to Brazil, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Morocco, the Philippines, and Senegal. ECA reserves the right to add or remove countries and regions depending on Bureau and Mission priorities. To prepare for the exchanges, U.S. teachers will take part in a rigorous semester-long online course in fall 2018 focused on best practices in global education, an in-person professional development workshop, and country-specific webinars and other activities administered by the U.S. cooperating organization to maximize the integration of their experience into U.S. classroom activities and curricula. During the program, participants develop resources (curricular units, lesson plans, virtual exchanges, or other materials or activities) for use in U.S. classrooms, schools, and districts to better equip U.S. students for future careers in an interconnected world, and build relationships with international host teachers as well as with other U.S. teachers on the program, in order to continue collaborating upon their return.

Applicant organizations' proposals should also include creative, cost-effective ways to support other U.S. teachers and administrators who do not participate in the TGC program in learning best practices in global education. Strategies might include workshops and/or virtual professional development.

For planning purposes, the available budget for this program's administration and program costs is approximately \$2,035,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

### **Programs for International Teachers**

International teachers participate in teaching and professional development programs that have important benefits for U.S. universities and K-12 schools as well as the

teachers' home systems and schools. U.S. universities and K-12 schools compete in merit-based competitions to host international teachers, and the international teachers contribute to the globalization and integration of educational best practices on their campuses and schools. U.S. K-12 teachers, students and communities learn about the culture, society, and history of the international teachers during field experiences and teaching assignments. Many of these U.S. communities would not otherwise have the opportunity to engage with professionals from these countries.

Upon completion of ECA exchange programs, international teachers return to their home systems and schools with new methodologies, improved English language proficiency, a heightened sense of purpose, and leadership skills to make significant classroom and institutional improvements that result in stronger educational outcomes for their students. Exchange teachers return with a better understanding of typical American communities and the American people. They communicate these messages and stories to thousands of students, peers, and community members over the course of their careers, countering messages of extremism or anti-American sentiment that can arise from a lack of knowledge about the United States.

Programs for international teachers inculcate leadership competencies that allow teachers to lead workshops with peers in their home countries or assume increased responsibilities. Teachers develop curriculum and community programs that support education for all children and move from using rote memorization in the classroom to interactive, collaborative methods. Participating international teachers help their students become responsible citizens, engage in critical thinking, develop problem solving skills, and improve their proficiency in English. All of these skills improve their students' access to opportunities for further education and employment and help to positively inform participating teachers' and their students' opinions of the United States, thereby increasing global security and stability.

### **Component C – for International Teachers**

The **Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP)** expands significantly the number of U.S. K-12 students learning the critical languages of Arabic and Mandarin, to provide students with foreign language and communication skills that support U.S. international engagement and strengthen America's competitiveness in the global economy. Current educational and scientific research indicates the importance of learning additional languages at the elementary and secondary level for cognitive brain development and improved second language acquisition. Experts concur that students' learning of languages such as Arabic and Chinese must be started much earlier than university level in order to gain full proficiency. The Teachers of Critical Languages Program encourages that effort by supporting approximately 14 English teachers from China and approximately eight English teachers from Egypt and/or Morocco to teach Chinese and Arabic in U.S. elementary and secondary schools for the 2018-19 academic year. The language teachers and their U.S. students collaborate

on projects, visit each other's schools virtually or in person, and sustain U.S. students' engagement with critical languages. Upon return to their home countries of China, Egypt, and Morocco, international teachers maintain ongoing relationships between their students and students in the schools where they spent their exchange year.

The cooperating U.S. organization should recruit exchange teachers and U.S. schools to host them; oversee the placement of the Chinese and Arabic teachers; provide a comprehensive academic orientation session in the United States on relevant U.S. pedagogical, educational, and cultural issues; conduct fall and spring professional development workshops; and monitor and support the teachers and their engagement in the U.S. host schools. U.S. schools should also be encouraged to provide cost-sharing for a language teacher. For planning purposes, the budget for program and administration costs for this program is approximately \$1,250,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds. Depending on the availability of funds and the opportunity for cost-sharing, additional participants and/or languages of strategic importance may be added to the program.

#### **Component D – for International Teachers**

The Teacher Exchange Branch offers the **Teaching Excellence and Achievement (TEA) Program** for six weeks, and the **Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program** for an academic semester. The majority of the international teachers, often from underserved school systems and schools, will take part in the six-week program in approximately nine groups of no more than 22 participants each; the cooperating agency should have the capacity to place approximately two groups of up to 22 (for a total of 44 teachers) in the semester-long program, four of which will be cost-shared, at ECA's request. As part of these programs, leading educators from over seventy countries undertake professional development, conduct projects, attend courses at U.S. university schools of education, participate in an instructional technology class as appropriate, and observe and co-teach with U.S. partner teachers for six weeks (Teaching Excellence and Achievement) or an academic semester (Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching), respectively.

1. The Teaching Excellence and Achievement (TEA) program places teachers in groups of up to 22 for a six-week period during the spring or fall semester at U.S. university schools of education, where the participants collaborate with U.S. professors of education and practicing U.S. teachers; attend professional development and technology seminars, workshops, and conferences on education-related and pedagogical topics; teach or team-teach as part of a practicum for 40 hours in U.S. secondary school classrooms with experienced U.S. partner teachers; and develop an action plan to implement in their home schools the best practices they observe in the U.S. once they return. It is anticipated that the program will support approximately

198 total international teachers in multi-national groups for six week periods in the spring and fall of 2019.

2. Through the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program, the cooperating agency should plan to place approximately two groups of international teachers in groups of up to 22 (for a total of 44 teachers, four of whom may likely be cost-shared by another organization) for an academic semester at U.S. university schools of education, where the teachers audit two graduate courses; collaborate with U.S. professors of education and practicing U.S. teachers; attend professional development and technology seminars, workshops, and conferences on education-related and pedagogical topics; spend time in elementary or secondary schools to build relationships and/or co-teach, learn about U.S. best practices, and share their expertise. They also complete projects, with guidance from faculty advisors, on topics of their own choosing. Participants may choose to complete an individual project or collaborate with other participants. Projects may include professional development workshops, curriculum units, teaching resources, or other materials to implement what they learned in the United States after they return home. The program should be flexible in providing an appropriate professional development experience for teachers with a range of experience and expertise. Teachers come from a wide variety of countries and educational systems-- some will have had few professional development opportunities and work in schools with few resources in the developing world, while others will be master teachers from well-resourced schools in developed countries. It is anticipated that the program will support approximately 44 international teachers for a semester-long program in either the fall of 2018 and/or the spring of 2019 (this total of 44 includes approximately four teachers for whom cost-share would be provided).

The international teachers taking part in these programs gain an in-depth understanding of U.S. schools, universities, and culture and prepare training workshops and materials to implement in their home schools and share with colleagues. Participants are full-time teachers of English, English as a Foreign Language, math, science, computer science, social studies, or special education. Other disciplines may be added as well. For the semester program, library/media specialists, guidance counselors, and administrators who spend at least half of their time interacting directly with students are also eligible. U.S. students and teachers benefit from the international teachers' presence in host schools, universities, and communities as they share their teaching expertise as well as information about their cultures and schools.

For planning purposes, the combined budget for program and administration of the two programs under this component is approximately \$5,370,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

#### Program Administration

In a Cooperative Agreement, ECA/A/S/X is substantially involved in program activities

above and beyond routine monitoring. Bureau responsibilities for all teacher exchange programs in the four components include:

- 1) Participation in the design and direction of program activities;
- 2) Approval of key personnel;
- 3) Approval and input on program timelines, agendas and administrative procedures;
- 4) Guidance in execution of all program components;
- 5) Review and approval of all program publicity and recruitment materials;
- 6) Approval of participating teachers and administrators, in cooperation with Fulbright commissions, U.S. embassies, and other partner organizations (all Fulbright program candidates are also subject to selection by the FFSB);
- 7) Approval of decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program;
- 8) Assistance with participants' non-immigrant visa status and other SEVIS-related issues;
- 9) Assistance with participant emergencies;
- 10) Liaison with relevant U.S. embassies, Fulbright commissions, country desk officers at the State Department, and other State Department bureaus and offices.

Programs must conform with Bureau requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package, which includes the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI), and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI).

#### Award Recipient(s) Responsibilities

For each component, the award recipient(s) is/are responsible for:

- 1) Outreach, recruitment, and screening of applicants using internet technology and in-person engagement;
- 2) A distinct website for all program components with the content to be cleared by the Teacher Exchange Branch;
- 3) SEVIS duties and preparation of DS-2019 forms with a G Program Number under the Bureau's responsibility on behalf of the Teacher Exchange Branch's Programs for International Teachers: Component C) Teachers of Critical Languages and D) Teaching Excellence and Achievement and Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching programs;
- 4) Orientation programs, professional in-service meetings, and debriefings;
- 5) Training and orientation of host U.S. educators and mentor teachers who will work with the international teachers on Components C) Teachers of Critical Languages and D) Teaching Excellence and Achievement and Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching programs;
- 6) Placement, monitoring, supervision, and support of participants;
- 7) Administering sub-award competitions as necessary; and

- 8) Fiscal management, evaluation, and follow-on and alumni activities for the programs described above.

Please see the POGI for details pertaining to these activities for each program. The Bureau's program office and (the) award recipient(s) will meet regularly and will maintain regular telephone and email communications with each other regarding program implementation.

#### Additional Guidelines

New for the FY 2018 cycle, applicant organizations must submit **one** proposal that includes a 20 page narrative outlining a comprehensive strategy for the administration and implementation of all four components **and separate administrative and program budgets for each of the four components:** Component A – for U.S. Teachers: Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program (semester research and short-term); Component B - for U.S. Teachers: Teachers for Global Classrooms Program; Component C – for International Teachers: Teachers of Critical Languages Program; and Component D - for International Teachers: Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program and Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program. Proposals should reflect an overarching vision for the program components, interpreting the goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act and the Teacher Exchange Program with creativity to achieve long-term objectives. Proposals should provide ideas for collaboration among participants and alumni across program components, for the benefit of participants, alumni and their schools and communities. Applicant organizations should outline a plan to work with the media and other organizations, in close consultation with the Bureau, to ensure that the program and its awards and achievements receive appropriate publicity.

The narrative portion of the proposal should not exceed 20 pages. Proposals may utilize appendices as needed to illustrate elements of the narrative.

Where possible, proposals should reflect economies of scale and should demonstrate administrative efficiencies.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information.

#### **B. Federal Award Information:**

**Type of Award:** Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under A. Program Description.

**Fiscal Year Funds:** 2018

**Approximate Total Funding:** \$10,450,000, pending availability of FY 2018 funds

**Approximate Number of Awards:** up to 3

**Approximate Average Award:** Component A – for U.S. Teachers: Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program (semester research and short term programs), \$1,795,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds; Component B – for

U.S. Teachers: Teachers for Global Classrooms Program, \$2,035,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds; Component C – for International Teachers: Teachers of Critical Languages Program, \$1,250,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds; Component D – for International Teachers: Teaching Excellence and Achievement and Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching, \$5,370,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

**Floor of Award Range:** \$1,250,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds

**Ceiling of Award Range:** \$10,450,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds

**Anticipated Award Date:** Pending availability of FY 2018 funds, October 1, 2017

**Anticipated Project Completion Date:** September 30, 2022

**Additional Information:** Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this/these cooperative agreement(s) for two additional consecutive fiscal years, before openly competing the award(s) again.

### **C. Eligibility Information:**

**C.1. Eligible applicants:** Applications may be submitted by U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

Consortia of eligible organizations applying for cooperative agreements should designate one organization to be the primary recipient of the Cooperative Agreement award: this primary recipient would be responsible for oversight of the other members of the consortium as part of the award. Proposals from consortia should provide a detailed description of the responsibilities of each partner organization.

To facilitate effective communication between ECA's Teacher Exchange Branch (ECA/A/S/X) and the award recipient(s) cooperating on these programs, applicant organizations with primary responsibility for any of the programs falling under the four components should have offices and staffs located in Washington, D.C., at the time of application.

**C.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds:** There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed

as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

### **C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:**

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making up to three awards, in a total amount of up to \$10,450,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds, and with a floor of no less than \$1,250,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds, to support program and administrative costs required to implement these exchange programs. Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

b.) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with the following or they will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

- Applicant organizations are required to submit a single, comprehensive proposal that addresses Components A, B, C, and D.
- Eligible applicants may not submit more than one proposal in this competition. If more than one proposal is received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process. **Please note:** Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

### **D. Application and Submission Information:**

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

#### **D.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package:**

Please contact Mr. Michael Kuban, Senior Program Officer in the Teacher Exchange Branch, ECA/A/S/X, SA-5, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone: (202) 632-6346 and fax number: (202) 632-9479, e-mail: [KubanMM@state.gov](mailto:KubanMM@state.gov), to request a Solicitation Package.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Michael Kuban and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

**D.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:**

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

**D.2a. Content and Form of Submission:** Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under D.3p. "Application Deadline and Method of Submission" section below.

**D.3a.** You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your UEI (DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package.

**D.3b.** All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative, and a separate budget and budget narrative for each of the four program components. The one comprehensive proposal narrative should not exceed twenty (20) total double-spaced pages in length. Applicant organizations must apply to administer all four components, A, B, C, and D.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document and the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

**D.3c.** All federal award recipients must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database in order to submit a proposal in response to an open competition on Grants.gov.

All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. There is no cost associated with registering or updating SAM.gov accounts. Failure to register in SAM.gov will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

D.3d. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

D.3e. In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

D.3f. If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

D.3g. All ECA awards recipient organizations must be registered with GrantSolutions by accessing [www.GrantSolutions.gov](http://www.GrantSolutions.gov). To register as a first time user of GrantSolutions, please scroll to the bottom of the home page and click "Getting Started-Request a User Account" at <http://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/home/customer-support/getting-started/>. Organizations that have previously used GrantSolutions do not need to register

again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact GrantSolutions.gov Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Grantee Organizations is available from 8 AM – 6 PM Washington, DC time, Monday – Friday and can be reached at [help@grantsolutions.gov](mailto:help@grantsolutions.gov) or 1-866-577-0771. Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

#### **D.3h. ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA**

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The award recipient(s) will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division  
U.S. Department of State  
SA-44, Suite 668  
301 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

#### **D.3i. Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines**

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social and cultural life in the United States and abroad. 'Diversity' should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will enhance the program's goals and objectives and the participants' exchange experience. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support of Diversity' section of this document as well as the DIVERSITY, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY section in the "Proposal Submission

Instructions” document for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

#### **D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project’s success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization(s) will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project’s objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this NOFO.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the NOFO (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.

2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. **Participant behavior**, such as concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

**Please note:** Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups). (Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

**D.3k. Virtual Exchange Component:** ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage appropriate mobile and/or online technologies to maintain engagement among exchange participants, encourage project collaboration and widen participation in the overall project to a broader audience. ECA strongly encourages organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange component(s) could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange component(s), defined as technology-enabled, sustainable, people-to-people, cross-cultural exchanges, is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and social networking platforms, including our International Exchange Alumni space. Virtual

exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project by project basis.

**D.3l. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients:** All ECA Grant Recipients must adhere to the requirements in [ECA's Communications Guidance](#) on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

D.3m. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

D.3n. Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification. It is anticipated that total funding for the Cooperative Agreement award(s) for program administration of the four components of the Teacher Exchange Program described here will be approximately \$10,450,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

D.3o. Allowable costs for the program and additional budget guidance are outlined in detail in the POGI document. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

D.3p. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: Thursday, June 22, 2017

Method of Submission:

Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the “Find” portion of the system.

**PLEASE NOTE:** ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov

Please follow the instructions available in the ‘Get Started’ portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays

Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

**It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.**

D.3q. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

## **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

### **E.1. REVIEW CRITERIA**

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

- 1. Quality of the program idea:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission.
- 2. Program planning/Ability to achieve program objectives:** Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.
- 3. Support of Diversity:** Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration and of program design, content, and implementation, including grantee/participant recruitment, selection and placement. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated diversity plan, and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity.
- 4. Institutional Capacity:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (grants or cooperative agreements) as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.
- 5. Project Evaluation:** Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. Award recipient(s) will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

**6. Cost-effectiveness/Cost-sharing:** The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

**7. Follow-on activities:** Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

## **F. Federal Award Administration Information**

### **F.1. Award Notices:**

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

All awards made under this competition must be executed according to all relevant U.S. laws and policies regarding assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and to the West Bank and Gaza. Organizations must consult with relevant Public Affairs Offices before entering into any formal arrangements or agreements with Palestinian organizations or institutions.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact Michael Kuban, (202) 632-6346, [KubanMM@state.gov](mailto:KubanMM@state.gov) for additional information.

### **F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:**

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following:

Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars). For a copy of the OMB Guidance cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov) website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/>

<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>

**F.3. Reporting Requirements:** You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

*Mandatory:*

- 1.) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). A SF-PPR “Performance Progress Report” Cover Sheet must be submitted with all programmatic reports and can be found here: [http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=20&menu\\_id=68](http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68). The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Grant Note* under the corresponding record for this Agreement in GrantSolutions.gov. For assistance, please contact the GrantSolutions Help Desk at 1 (866) 577-0771 (toll free for US callers) or by email at [help@grantsolutions.gov](mailto:help@grantsolutions.gov).
- 2.) The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to GrantSolutions.gov, in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.
- 3.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
- 4.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This report should be e-mailed to: [FFATAECA@state.gov](mailto:FFATAECA@state.gov). This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

**F.4. Program Data Requirements:**

Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on all current program participants and alumni and their activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:

- 1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the agreement or who benefit from the award funding but do not travel.
- 2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

**G. Agency Contacts**

For questions about this announcement, contact: Mr. Michael Kuban, Teacher Exchange Branch, ECA/A/S/X, U.S. Department of State, SA-5, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, 2200 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, phone: (202) 632-6346, fax: (202) 632-9479; e-mail: [KubanMM@state.gov](mailto:KubanMM@state.gov).

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this NOFO should reference the title and the funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

**H. Other Information:****Notice:**

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section F.3. Reporting Requirements above.

Mark Taplin  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs  
U.S. Department of State

April 24, 2017